



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 1076

January Session, 2003

***AN ACT ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGE OF NURSES,
PHARMACISTS, ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, DENTAL
HYGIENISTS AND DENTAL ASSISTANTS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) (a) There is established a
2 Connecticut nursing, pharmacy and allied health profession incentive
3 program administered by the Department of Higher Education.
- 4 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide
5 grants to nursing, pharmacy and allied health students (1) in nursing,
6 pharmacy or allied health education programs at any institution of
7 higher education approved by the Board of Governors of Higher
8 Education or at any regional vocational-technical school, or (2)
9 completing the requirements of such a nursing, pharmacy or allied
10 health education program as a graduate student, provided such
11 student received a grant pursuant to this section for one year at the
12 undergraduate level. No student shall receive a grant under the
13 program for more than two years. Maximum grants shall not exceed
14 five thousand dollars per year. The department shall ensure that at
15 least ten per cent of the grant recipients are minority students who
16 transfer from a Connecticut regional community-technical college.
- 17 (c) Beginning January 1, 2006, a student who received grants under
18 subsection (b) of this section, and who is employed as a nurse,

19 pharmacist or allied health professional in an acute care hospital in this
20 state, a health care institution in this state, as defined in subsection (a)
21 of section 19a-490 of the general statutes, or a pharmacy in this state, as
22 defined in section 20-571 of the general statutes, shall be eligible for
23 reimbursement of federal or state educational loans up to a maximum
24 of two thousand five hundred dollars per year for up to four years of
25 such service.

26 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this
27 section, the combined dollar value of grants and loan reimbursements
28 shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars per student.

29 (e) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2004, and June 30, 2005, the
30 Department of Higher Education may use up to two per cent of the
31 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for program
32 administration, promotion, recruitment and retention activities that are
33 designed to increase the number of students pursuing nursing,
34 pharmacy and allied health careers at institutions of higher education
35 or regional vocational-technical schools.

36 (f) Not later than January 1, 2005, the Commissioner of Higher
37 Education shall submit a status report, in accordance with the
38 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the establishment
39 and operation of the incentive program authorized under this section
40 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
41 cognizance of matters relating to education, public health and higher
42 education and employment advancement.

43 (g) For purposes of this section, "allied health education program"
44 means a program that qualifies a student to work as an allied health
45 professional, and "allied health professional" means a professional or
46 paraprofessional who is qualified by special training, education, skills
47 and experience in providing health care, treatment and diagnostic
48 services under the supervision of or in collaboration with a licensed
49 practitioner of a health profession, and includes, but is not limited to,
50 licensed nurses, certified nurse assistants, home health aides, physician

51 assistants, technologists, therapists and technicians.

52 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) (a) There is established a
53 Connecticut dental hygienist and dental assistant incentive program
54 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

55 (b) Within available appropriations, the program shall provide
56 grants to students enrolled in dental hygienist or dental assistant
57 education programs at any institution of higher education approved
58 by the Board of Governors of Higher Education or at any regional
59 vocational-technical school. No student shall receive a grant under the
60 program for more than two years. Maximum grants shall not exceed
61 two thousand five hundred dollars per year. The department shall
62 ensure that at least ten per cent of the grant recipients are minority
63 students.

64 (c) Beginning January 1, 2006, a student who received grants under
65 subsection (b) of this section, and who is employed as a dental
66 hygienist or dental assistant at a public health facility in this state, as
67 defined in section 20-126l of the general statutes, shall be eligible for
68 reimbursement of federal or state educational loans up to a maximum
69 of two thousand five hundred dollars per year for up to four years of
70 such service.

71 (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this
72 section, the combined dollar value of grants and loan reimbursements
73 shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars per student.

74 (e) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2004, and June 30, 2005, the
75 Department of Higher Education may use up to two per cent of the
76 funds appropriated for purposes of this section for program
77 administration, promotion, recruitment and retention activities that are
78 designed to increase the number of students pursuing careers as dental
79 hygienists and dental assistants at institutions of higher education or
80 regional vocational-technical schools.

81 (f) Not later than January 1, 2005, the Commissioner of Higher

82 Education shall submit a status report, in accordance with the
83 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the establishment
84 and operation of the incentive program authorized under this section
85 to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
86 cognizance of matters relating to education, public health and higher
87 education and employment advancement.

88 (g) For purposes of this section, "dental hygienist education
89 program" includes any program of study or courses taken to earn a
90 degree or license as a dental hygienist or to upgrade knowledge and
91 skills as a dental hygienist, and "dental assistant education program"
92 includes any program of study or courses taken to earn a certificate as
93 a dental assistant or to upgrade knowledge and skills as a dental
94 assistant.

95 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) Within available appropriations,
96 the Board of Governors of Higher Education, in consultation with the
97 State Dental Commission established under section 20-103a of the
98 general statutes, the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the
99 Commissioner of Public Health, the Labor Commissioner and the
100 superintendent of the regional vocational-technical school system,
101 shall:

102 (1) Not later than February 4, 2004, and in accordance with the
103 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, report to the
104 Governor and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
105 having cognizance of matters relating to higher education and
106 employment advancement concerning recommendations for
107 improving degree and certification programs for the education and
108 training of dental hygienists and dental assistants in order to increase
109 the number of students who enter and successfully complete such
110 programs;

111 (2) Develop an initiative to expand dental hygienist and dental
112 assistant academic programs to promote increased enrollment and
113 retention in such programs; and

114 (3) Recruit students for dental hygienist and dental assistant
115 academic programs who have traditionally been underrepresented in
116 such occupations.

117 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) (a) Within available
118 appropriations, the Department of Higher Education shall coordinate
119 with the Board of Trustees of the Community-Technical Colleges to
120 ensure that credit courses in radiological technology and laboratory
121 technology are offered in the state on a regional basis.

122 (b) Within available appropriations, the Board of Trustees of the
123 Community-Technical Colleges shall offer weekend and evening
124 courses in radiological technology and laboratory technology.

125 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) Within available appropriations,
126 the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, in conjunction with the
127 Labor Department, shall develop a strategy to encourage hospitals in
128 this state to establish hospital-based training programs in the areas of
129 radiological technology and laboratory technology which focus on
130 transitioning incumbent health care employees into such areas.

131 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2003*) Not later than February 4, 2004,
132 and within available appropriations, the Office of Workforce
133 Competitiveness, in consultation with representatives of labor
134 organizations representing health care workers in this state,
135 representatives of institutions licensed under chapter 368v of the
136 general statutes, and representatives of professional associations of
137 nurses and allied health care workers shall coordinate a state-wide
138 marketing campaign to promote career opportunities in nursing and
139 allied health in this state. Such campaign shall include, but not be
140 limited to, the issuance of press releases and the distribution of
141 pamphlets, films and public service announcements concerning the
142 state's current and future need for nurses and allied health
143 professionals. For purposes of this section, "labor organization" means
144 any organization that exists and is constituted for the purpose, in
145 whole or in part, of collective bargaining, or of dealing with employers

146 concerning grievances, terms or conditions of employment, or other
 147 mutual aid or protection, and "institutions" has the same meaning as in
 148 section 19a-490 of the general statutes.

149 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Office of Workforce
 150 Competitiveness, in consultation with the Labor Commissioner and
 151 the Commissioners of Higher Education and Public Health, shall
 152 develop a plan for the establishment of a Connecticut Healthcare
 153 Workforce Advisory Board which shall develop a long-range strategic
 154 plan to (1) promote recruitment and retention of licensed registered
 155 nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nurse's aides, home health
 156 aides and other categories of health care workers for which a shortage
 157 has been identified in this state, and (2) ensure a coordinated approach
 158 to implementing identified strategies for the recruitment and retention
 159 of such workers.

160 (b) Not later than September 1, 2003, the Office of Workforce
 161 Competitiveness shall report, in accordance with the provisions of
 162 section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of
 163 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
 164 education and employment advancement on the establishment of the
 165 Connecticut Healthcare Workforce Advisory Board authorized by the
 166 provisions of subsection (a) of this section and any strategies identified
 167 by the board for addressing this state's shortage of nurses, nurse's
 168 aides, home health aides and other health care workers.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>

HED

Joint Favorable Subst. C/R

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